

**U.S. Pat. Appl. Ser. No. 10/576,221
Attorney Docket No. 10191/4229
Reply to Office Action of December 11, 2007**

REMARKS

With the cancellation herein without prejudice of claims 11 and 15, claims 12 to 14 and 16 to 20 are pending in the present application, since claims 1 to 10 were previously canceled. It is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the acknowledgement of the claim for foreign priority and the indication that all certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the previously filed Information Disclosure Statements (IDS), PTO-1449 papers, and cited references. However, with respect to U.S. Patent No. 4,282,493, listed in the 1449 paper filed April 13, 2006, the Examiner has not initialed this listing, and it is not clear whether the Examiner has considered this reference. It is believed and respectfully submitted that this reference has been properly cited, and consideration of this reference is respectfully requested. Applicants respectfully request an initialed copy of the PTO-1449 paper that initials all of the listed references with the next Office communication.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 16 and 17 include allowable subject matter. In this regard, the Examiner will note that claim 16 has been rewritten in independent form to include the subject matter of its base claim and any intervening claim. The Examiner will further note that each of claims 12, 14, 18, and 19 has been amended so that claims 12 to 14 and 18 to 20 depend from claim 16. It is therefore respectfully submitted that claim 16, and its dependent claims 12 to 14 and 17 to 20 are allowable.

The remaining rejected claims have been canceled without prejudice, so as to obviate all the remaining claim rejections.

Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the claims as previously presented in a continuation patent application. Further, any disclaimer that may have occurred during the prosecution of this application is expressly rescinded as regards any subsequently filed patent application.

Accordingly, all of pending claims 12 to 14 and 16 to 20 are allowable.

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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all of pending claims 12 to 14 and 16 to 20 are allowable. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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